

Ban on the export of fishes.—The Director of Food Supplies has been asked to see that facilities are afforded for the transport of dried fish to those areas where the demand is very large.

Foot-path in front of Narakkal Police Station has been improved.

The work of the foot-path from Narakkal to Nedugad bridge has been taken up.

The foot-path works from Narakkal to Manjanakad has been included in the budget of 1121.

A bridge across the Banerji Canal has been included in the Public Works Department programme of 1121.

Land Acquisition proceedings for the extension of the road from Narakkal to Vypeen is to be taken up in 1121.

FALL IN PRICE OF BETEL NUTS AFTER PROCLAMATION II OF 1120

284. Mr. Paramel Iype Iype (Kunnamkulam): Will Government be pleased to state.—

(a) the price prevailing in Talappalli Taluk for one lb. of uncured betel nuts (without husk) from the date of the Promulgation of Proclamation II of 1120;

(b) the price that prevailed in the year 1118 and 1119;

(c) whether the price of this commodity has not gone down considerably from the date of the Proclamation II of 1120;

(d) what action the Government has taken to compensate, the cultivators of this commodity for this heavy fall in price;

(e) whether tea and coffee cultivations are not carried by big estate owners and limited companies;

(f) what is the area of the smallest tea or coffee estate situated in Cochin State;

(g) whether betel nut cultivation is not a small scale cultivation carried on by poor ryots with little or no capital at their command;

(h) what is the area of the biggest betel-nut cultivation situated in Cochin State?

Mr. C. J. Mathew (Joint Secretary to Government): (a) In Kanni 1120 the price per lb. of uncured nuts (without husk) was Re. 0—2—1. The price has been daily increasing from the date of promulgation and it is now Re. 0—3—5 per lb. exclusive of duty.

(b) In 1118 the average price was Re. 0—4—5½ per lb. and in 1119 it was Re. 0—5—1.

(c) No. (See answer to (a))

(d) No action has been taken by Government. Since Kanni 1120 the price has been steadily increasing.

(e) Yes.

(f) The smallest coffee estate is 60 acres in extent.

(g) Broadly speaking it is small scale cultivation and the majority of the cultivators have very little capital at their command. But there are also a number of middle class farmers and a few rich landlords engaged in the cultivation.

(h) Correct statistics regarding area of arecanut gardens are not available. There are no gardens over 20 to 25 acres in extent as far as enquiries go.

285. Mr. Paramel Iype Iype (Kunnamkulam): Will Government be pleased to state.—

(a) after the Proclamation II of 1120, whether any arecanuts gardens of Talappalli Taluk have been left unirrigated;

(b) what is the area left so unirrigated;

(c) is not the arecanut cultivation of Talappalli Taluk on irrigated system of cultivation;

(d) what will be the annual expense to maintain an arecanut tree in good condition in these days of high cost for labour and manure;

(e) what will the average annual yield per arecanut tree in the Talappalli Taluk;

(f) what will be the average excise duty that may fall upon an arecanut tree under Proclamation II of 1120, when calculated on the basis of its average yield per year?

Mr. C. J. Mathew (Joint Secretary to Government): (a) There are very few gardens which were left completely unirrigated. But there were a number of cases where irrigation was not properly or completely given for want of water.

(b) No statistics are available.

(c) Yes.

(d) Re. 0—11—4.

(e) 200 nuts or about 5 lbs. of raw husked nuts.

(f) 3 annas 5 pies.